



Draft outdoor recreation economy strategies – 8/19/19

Below are draft concepts – not representing a formal position of the Governor’s Task Force on the Outdoors or endorsement by any individual member – focused on the goal to: “support economic development in both rural and urban areas.”

Invest in Capacity and Technical Assistance

1. Recreation Industry Incubation and Acceleration Grants – the concept is to provide funding to support Oregon's outdoor manufacturing sector through matching grants to membership organizations and business accelerators for the purpose of capacity building and technical assistance. A lack of resources and access to capital leads to promising companies regularly dying on the vine. By establishing a matching grant program to support mentoring and capacity for young companies, the proposed program would help Oregon companies to grow in place and entice out-of-state companies to relocate to Oregon. The concept was introduced as legislation in the 2019 Legislative Session as HB 3251, passing out of the Committee of origin on a unanimous, bi-partisan vote. If existing programs do not meet the identified need, bring a new version of legislation forward with agency and/or Governor’s support that includes identified matching funds after consultation with stakeholders.
2. Community Catalyst / Regional Coordinators / Outreach Specialists. Regardless of name, there is an identified need by agencies, elected officials, businesses and community organizations for additional capacity building and technical assistance at the local level. Serving a geographic area, but not a specific land manager or recreation type, these positions could be housed in a number of agencies, jointly, or in an academic institution. Additional work is needed to scope exact duties, and propose a pilot location.
 - a. If staffed, one concept that could be advanced is the idea of “recreation zone management” which recognizes that community livability and economy are linked to the surrounding landscape, and people seek out places and experiences, not a specific land manager and shapes management decisions, marketing, and funding accordingly.
3. Outdoor Recreation Entrepreneur Navigators. Have regional point-people in various parts of the state that can walk an entrepreneur in this realm through the various local, state, and federal processes and opportunities for support. Think of this model as similar to Regional Solutions – a hub and spoke of coordinator and aligned agencies – but hyper focused on the outdoors. Possible agencies involved include DLCD, DEQ, Business Oregon, Travel Oregon, OSMB, ODFW and OREC/OPRD.



4. Building on Rural Tourism Studios – Travel Oregon's Rural Tourism Studios identified communities willing to support and embrace tourism as a part of their economy. Propose building on that work to both promote the use of the studios to new communities but also financially implement plans, especially those that are more supportive of outdoor recreation (and add bonus points for welcoming new people to the outdoors). Could be either building new infrastructure or helping mitigate areas where resources are overtaxed. An assessment could be done across all rural studio plans and criteria developed to help prioritize plans and action items that best meet the goals of the Office of Outdoor Recreation, then work with various state agencies (e.g. OPRD, ODOT, etc.) to help prioritize and fund projects.

Build the Oregon Brand

5. Develop a statewide directory of outdoor recreation related businesses and non-profit organizations to aid in outreach and networking. This project aligns with needs from OSU Outdoor Recreation Economy Initiative, Regional Solutions, Travel Oregon, Oregon Outdoor Alliance and direct stakeholder input. See PDX Athletic & Outdoor Ecosystem ecosystem.aoportland.com as inspiration.
 - a. This project can also serve a need for a shared services network for small and medium sized companies.
6. With Business Oregon, develop outreach materials targeted to Outdoor Gear and Apparel businesses that provide an overview of the types of funding and technical assistance tools available from the agency. While most, if not all, of these tools are available to a variety of sectors, specific materials may help increase utilization by this target sector.
7. Create outdoor sector work groups to both flesh out and narrow down ideas for how to grow this industry. Suggestions for topics include Team Oregon approach, domestic sales and tradeshow assistance, innovation funding, and support for technical assistance and capacity building.
8. Establish a statewide brand and marketing strategy for the outdoor industry.
9. Coordinate a “Day of Action” coinciding with Oregon Outdoor Recreation Day, and collaborate with industry and community organizations from across the state – activities should focus on engagement, awareness building, and giving back.

Address Barriers to Business Success



10. Reconvene partners to address recreational immunity and liability gaps in Oregon and propose legislative improvements. These issues are in a state of flux, and are of interest to public land managers, private land owners and facilitated recreation providers.
 - a. Explore novel solutions such as extending recreational immunity to private land owners, including those who invite use but charge not more than \$15 day, \$100 year for access to their land (deliberative example).
 - b. Different solutions may be needed for recreational immunity and liability.
11. Improve Rural Internet Access - Internet access (especially wireless) is a key component to supporting the economy in rural areas, especially in the area of increased outdoor use for new participants. Need to know what is currently proposed to increase internet access in rural areas and future support for 5g networks. Note: coordinate with the Governor's new Broadband Office to understand status of statewide efforts for internet as a core infrastructure need to support economic development.

Support Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Experiences

12. Identify one signature recreation project in each of Oregon's Congressional districts through a competitive application process. Benefits of being selected as a signature project could vary to include grant support, convening, technical assistance, promotion or case study development highlighting principles of sustainable recreation use.
13. Create a comprehensive trails funding program that includes a categories for signature trails, close-to-home trails, and community-based outdoor groups. This fund should be developed and pursued as part of a broader conservation and recreation fund.
14. Recreation Infrastructure Grant Program – establish a grant program to provide funding for recreational infrastructure investments to local, State, tribal, and federal agencies for projects involving built recreational infrastructure that will provide an economic opportunity for local communities with the ability to increase visitation, boost local businesses, and/or attract and retain residents. While there are multiple grant programs supporting outdoor recreation management, most programs focus on discrete components of recreation management (e.g., the Recreational Trails Program focuses on motorized and non-motorized trail projects). Nationally, there are very few grant programs that serve as funding opportunities for broader aspects of outdoor recreation infrastructure needs, such as campgrounds, picnic areas, accessibility upgrades at existing facilities, etc.



- a. "Outdoor Infrastructure Grant" – similarly titled submitted proposal focused on the full array of recreation types
 - b. Oregon Outdoors Grant – submitted under balancing access with resource protection, includes funding for operations and maintenance
15. Statewide Recreation Fee Board - establish a statewide board with members appointed by the Governor to review and approve all new recreation fee proposals or any changes to current recreation fees for State and Federal (US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management) agencies. Both state and federal agencies rely on revenues from recreation fees to pay for these investments and to maintain the level of service the public desires. Demand for facilities and services continue to increase, resulting in the need to adjust fees accordingly. Agency coordination of fees, strategies, and opportunities to increase outdoor experiences is desired to ensure access and opportunity for all Oregon residents and visitors, minimize competition and confusion on the part of the public between state and federal facilities, provide access for youth to experience the outdoors, guard against cost limiting access, and to simplify access processes
16. Honor Sacred Sites - We have a chance to support indigenous rights, ceremony and economy as a pillar of our work. Engage Tribal Nations in identifying sites managed by the State and Federal government to adjust access, review economic impact and engage communities.

Cultivate Emerging Leaders and Companies

17. Strengthen investment in workforce development initiatives in the state, including ongoing support for Oregon State University's Outdoor Recreation Economy Initiative to address talent gaps and future needs for this sector.
18. Convene a working group of higher education institutions in Oregon with existing programs related to outdoor recreation to identify gaps, overlap and for shared promotion. This includes, at a minimum: SOU, EOU, OSU, UO, PSU and community colleges with outdoor recreation degrees or workforce training programs. Aligned work includes approaching the state Workforce and Talent Board to pursue designation of the outdoor industry as an official sector.
19. Create an Industry week within Oregon high schools, developed in coordination with businesses, university programs, economic development agencies and other partners.



20. Work with hiring/HR departments and executive recruitment firms to develop an inventory of current industry diversity recruitment and retention efforts and develop goals for improving local industry diversity.
21. Develop a network of organizations and information on training programs that companies can tap into to develop an inclusive culture.
22. Strategically plan for Culture Change:
 - 1) Identify the areas that make this work an imperative (access, health, community building, etc)
 - a) Provide a compelling reason for change: establishing the imperative for creating a new culture.
 - b) People must understand that this work is integral (to inclusion, to engagement, to healthy communities).
 - c) If not, the change effort will seem like another pet project/initiative.
 - d) This work needs to be meaningful to all and we have to make it something bolstered by communities across Oregon
 - 2) Redefine Competence
 - a) Leaders must lead – these folks may be working at City, State or Federal agencies, retailers, manufacturing, etc
 - b) This effort cannot rest on technical competence, develop skills for communication across difference, teamwork, partnering, feedback culture, etc
 - 3) Realign the Hierarchy Based on Updated Needs
 - a) Leaders must be role models and behavioral models
 - b) Must demonstrate that the new culture is the route to individual, group (collective) success
 - c) Link leadership to performance
 - 4) Develop Leaders
 - a) Skills for leading change and modeling inclusive behaviors require learning and practice and teaching
 - b) Leaders will need skilled, experienced people to support and coach them, and safe opportunities to learn and practice and teach new skills and behaviors
 - 5) Build a Core of Advocates for Change
 - a) Identify, develop and support formal and informal leaders from all levels of the organization who already hold some of the key values of the new culture (or are ready to learn them)
 - b) Support leaders developing their new competencies through coaching, education and networking



- 6) Change the People-Systems
 - a) Root out the rules and structures that support the old culture
 - b) Remove barriers that prevent people from doing their best work
 - c) Establish new norms, values, practices and policies that support inclusion, leverage the org diversity and enable higher performance

- 7) Build on the Pockets of Readiness
 - a) Don't try to fix or change people
 - b) Establish teams that see their vested interest in the new culture, equip them with the skills and resources they need to work together, and let them prove that change works.
 - c) Others will want to emulate their success standards